

## PROVENANCE STUDY OF A DOUBLE-STAMPED JAR HANDLE OF THE EARLY ISLAMIC PERIOD FROM RAMLA

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A stamped *zir*-jar handle was found on the surface in Area B (L130, B1235; see Toueg and Torgē, this volume) of the excavation in Azrieli Mall, Ramla.<sup>1</sup> Two stamps on the lower part of the handle are of identical design and orientation, one next to the other. The surface of the handle appears to have been smoothed with a knife before stamping.

The stamp design consists of a six-pointed star or hexagram formed from two triangles with wavy sides enclosed within a ring (int. diam. 19 mm, ext. diam. 22 mm), while a small ring is positioned at the center of the hexagram (diam. 3 mm). A dot occurs between each two of the small hexagram triangles. The top triangle in each stamp is blotted out by a round blob, perhaps a defect in the stamping devise. No other stamp bearing such a blob has yet been reported from the region.

### *Parallels*

A double-stamped handle, the stamps positioned side by side, was found in another excavation at Ramla (Amitai-Preiss 2015: Fig. 19:4) and at Khirbat el-Biyar (Amitai-Preiss, Cohen-Weinberger and Har-Even 2017:82, No. 8), both dating to the Early Islamic period. Stamps displaying a six-pointed star similar to the design in the present example were

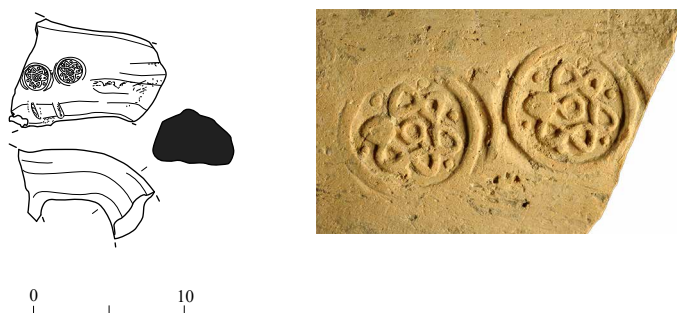


Fig. 1. Double-stamped *zir*-jar handle.

<sup>1</sup> The handle was drawn by Marina Shuiskaya and photographed by Clara Amit, both of the IAA.

reported from the pottery workshop at Nebi Samwil: a stamp with a central ring and a dot at its center and another with a dot at the center but without a central ring (Magen 2008: Pl. 3:2, 3, respectively).

### *Petrographic Analysis*

The stamped jar handle underwent petrographic analysis, and it was found to have been made from material that originated from the Lower Cenomanian Moza Formation, an identification which is based on several previous petrographic studies (e.g., Amitai-Preiss, Cohen-Weinberger and Har-Even 2017; Cohen-Weinberger, Levi and Be'eri 2020). Hence, the jar to which this handle belonged was probably made somewhere in the Judean Mountains. Any of the Early Islamic-period pottery workshops located in Jerusalem's rural hinterland, such as Nebi Samwil (Magen 2008; Amitai-Preiss, Cohen-Weinberger and Har-Even 2017), may have been the origin of this jar.

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